

Message Text

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DEPT PASS DAKAR, LUSAKA, ABIDJAN

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TAGS: PFOR, US, CG, AO

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH MOBUTU AND ANGOLA

REF: (A) STATE 10167 (B) KINSHASA 340 (NOTAL)

1. I DISCUSSED DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY ON ANGOLA WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU AT MEETING EVENING JAN 16. DRAWING ON POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL, I CONGRATULATED MOBUTU FOR HIS LEADING ROLE IN BLOCKING MPLA ATTEMPTS TO GAIN QUICK RECOGNITION AT ADDIS AND IN HELPING TO HOLD TOGETHER HALF OF MEMBERS FAVORING COMPROMISE POLITICAL SOLUTION DESPITE HEAVY PRESSURES FROM OPPONENTS. I SAID THIS IN ITSELF WAS MOST POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT AND LEFT WAY OPEN EVENTUAL NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WE BOTH SOUGHT. MOBUTU, OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH HIS EFFORTS AND THEIR RESULTS AT SUMMIT, AGREED THAT IMPORTANT POINT WAS THAT PLOY BY MPLA AND SOVETS TO CLOSE OFF ALL CHANCE FOR SUCH SETTLEMENT HAD BEEN FRUSTRATED. HE ALSO AGREED THAT I WAS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN PRESENT DIPLOMATIC POSITION. IN FACT IT WAS EVIDENT FROM THE RELATIVELY FEW COMMENTS HE HAD ON THE SUMMIT ITSELF THAT HE IS NOW FOCUSING HIS ATTENTION ON WAYS NOT ONLY TO KEEP THE AFRICAN MODERATES TOGETHER BUT TO EXPAND THEIR RANKS AND GALVANIZE THEM INTO PLAYING MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN ANGOLA SITUATION.

2. ON THE RECOGNITION QUESTION, MOBUTU SAID IN RESPONSE TO
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MY QUERY THAT THERE WERE SEVERAL STATES NOW IN THE MPLA

CAMP WHICH HE THOUGHT COULD BE WON OVER. THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE WAS NIGER, WHOSE LAST MINUTE SWITCH TO THE MPLA HAD BEEN MADE WITHOUT ITS PRESIDENT'S KNOWLEDGE OR CONCURRENCE. MOBUTU UNDERSTOOD THAT ON RETURN FROM THE OAU, THE PRESIDENT HAD IMMEDIATELY PLACED HIS MINISTER OF INFORMATION -- WHO HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR INSTIGATING NIGER'S RECOGNITION OF MPLA -- UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND WAS NOW PREPARING TO REVISE NIGER'S POSITION. MOBUTU SAID SENGHOR WAS PLAYING KEY ROLE IN TRYING TO BRING NIGER BACK INTO CAMP. MOBUTU SAID HE BELIEVED TWO OTHER GOVERNMENTS, WHICH HE COULD NOT READILY RECALL BUT WOULD IDENTIFY FOR ME LATER, COULD ALSO BE BROUGHT AROUND. HE WENT ON THE EXPRESS DISMAY THAT THE WORLD PRESS WAS PLAYING AN UNHELPFUL ROLE BY GIVING SO MUCH PLAY TO THOSE STATES WHICH DECIDED TO RECOGNIZE THE MPLA INSTEAD OF TO THOSE WHICH DID NOT. FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN BEFORE ETHIOPIA SIDED WITH THE MPLA, AMIN HAD LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE WOULD JOIN THE MPLA, AMIN HAD LET IT BE KNOWN THAT HE WOULD JOIN THE MODERATES. THE PRESS, HOWEVER, HAD ONLY TRUMPETED ETHIOPIAN DECISION AND THIS PUBLICITY WAS BOUND TO HAVE SOME INFLUENCE ON OTHER GOVERNMENTS' THINKING. I AGREED MEDIA OFTEN LACKED BALANCE. I THEN REFERRED TO WASHINGTON POST STORY (FILED BY OTTOWAY FROM ADDIS) UNDERLINING REMARKABLE COHESION OF STATES SUPPORTING NEGOTIATED SOLUTION, AND SAID THIS WAS EVIDENCE THAT SINCE SUMMIT THERE SEEMED TO BE GROWING RECOGNITION BY MEDIA OF STRENGTH OF MODERATE POSITION AMONG AFRICAN STATES. I ALSO NOTED OTTOWAY'S REFERENCE IN ARTICLE TO SIERRA LEONE, GAMBIA, TOGO, UPPER VOLTA. AND EGYPT AS STATES VULNERABLE TO MPLA PERSUASION. MOBUTU SAID HE DISAGREED ENTIRELY WITH THIS ASSESSMENT; THAT HE DID NOT VIEW ANY OF THEM AS WAVERERS, AND MENTIONED FACT THAT SENGHOR WOULD BE VISITING GAMBIA AND COULD BE COUNTED ON TO KEEP THAT GOVERNMENT IN LINE. MOBUTU SAID BULA WOULD SOON BE VISITING NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES (REF B) TO REINFORCE THEIR DETERMINATION TO HOLD LINE AGAINST MPLA RECOGNITION AND TO SPEAK OUT MORE FORCEFULLY AGAINST SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. HE SAID THAT, ACCORDING TO REPORT HE HAD JUST RECEIVED, RECENT QUANDRI-PARTITE TALKS IN DAR HAD RESULTED IN NO RPT NO CHANGE BY ANY OF FOUR GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATING.

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3. I GAIN EXPRESSED USG'S ADMIRATION FOR ZAIRE'S ACTIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE ON DIPLOMATIC FRONT. I SAID OUR POSITION ON A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT REMAINED UNCHANGED AND THAT WE, TOO, WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK HARD TOWARD THAT OBJECTIVE.

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